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ABSTRACT

For many years, librarians have been bothered by negative portrayals of librarians in the media. Unattractive, non-professional old maids have been the dominant images of librarians in the movies. In 1989, the American Library Association issued a campaign designed to promote a more accurate, positive image of the librarian in an attempt to change the existing negative stereotype. This study sought to determine whether librarians in the movies are now positive images. Thirty examples of library images in movies released from 1989 through 1999 were reviewed, and certain physical and professional characteristics were analyzed. Results show that librarians on the whole are portrayed mostly positively in recent movies. Both physical and professional characteristics are portrayed mostly positively, but filmmakers do need to keep widening the gap between librarians with positive physical characteristics and librarians with negative physical characteristics. Public librarians are portrayed the most and have positive images a vast majority of the time. Negative characteristics that are definitely gone are wearing hair in a bun and shushing patrons. Librarians in major roles are portrayed even more positively than other movie librarians, especially regarding physical characteristics. A copy of the data collection sheet and list of movies reviewed are appended. (Contains 14 references.) (Author/MES)

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SHELVING, STAMPING AND SHUSHING: LIBRARIANS IN THE MOVIES

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by

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Abstract

For many years librarians have been bothered by the negative portrayals of librarians in the media. Unattractive, non-professional old maids have been the dominant images of librarians in the movies. In 1989 the American Library Association issued a campaign designed to promote a more accurate, positive image of the librarian in an attempt to change the existing negative stereotype. The present study sought to determine whether librarians in the movies are now mostly positive images.

Thirty examples of librarian images in movies released from 1989 and 1999 were reviewed and certain physical and professional characteristics were analyzed. Results show that librarians on the whole are portrayed mostly positively in recent movies. Both physical and professional characteristics are portrayed mostly positively, but filmmakers do need to keep widening the gap between librarians with positive physical characteristics and librarians with negative physical characteristics. Public librarians are portrayed the most and are positive a vast majority of the time. Negative characteristics that are definitely gone are wearing hair in a bun and shushing patrons. Librarians in major roles are portrayed even more positively than other movie librarians, especially regarding physical characteristics.

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Chapter 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Marian Pardoo 1962, Gloria Mundy 1978, Gladys Beasley 1989. For many years now fictitious librarians have been portrayed in the media, and for many years real librarians have been bothered by the generally negative manner of these portrayals. In fact, ALA surveys have shown "that the image of the librarian ranks among the top five concerns of the profession" (Wallace 1989). The dominant image of librarians in the media such as movies has been that of an old maid. An older, single female with glasses, hair in a bun, wearing conservative clothing, and who "shushes" people are the typical characteristics. Many librarians feel that movies need to exchange the unrealistic, negative "old maid" image for a more realistic, positive, professional one.

Librarians are certainly justified in desiring such a change in their image. Negative images and perceptions held by society limits the status of the library profession, salaries of librarians, the growth of the profession, and the funding of libraries(Schuman 1990). Negative images also prove to be barriers to the use of the library. People who view librarians as unapproachable non-professionals won't be tempted to ask librarians questions or even to use the library. "If the image of librarians is a negative stereotype of either unapproachable, authoritarian characters or weak, incompetent hideaways, doing no more than shelving or stamping books, while saying 'shush,' it is hardly surprising that this would prove a barrier to people seeing the usefulness of librarians" (Green 1994).

While a few believe that the negative stereotype of librarians is in part based on reality, an extensive study on the psychological types of librarians done in 1992 showed

that this is no longer the case. Scherdin administered several tests, including a revised version of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator, to 1600 librarians and found the majority of librarians have personality characteristics which differ from the currently held stereotype (Sherdin 1995). If stereotypes are indeed partly based in reality, then since actual librarians today have different personality traits it should follow that the stereotypical image of librarians in the movies should reflect these changes.

In 1989, the American Library Association put forth a public awareness campaign which called on librarians to help promote a positive image (Wallace 1989). Their theme for National Library Week and for the "Year of the Librarian" was "Ask a Professional. Ask Your Librarian" which was promoted in various types of media (Wallace 1989). The goal of ALA's campaign was to tell people what librarians do for them, to promote awareness of the librarian as a professional, to present librarianship as an attractive career opportunity, and to make librarians feel good and proud of their profession (Wallace 1989).

Purpose of the Study

Ten years have passed since ALA ran their campaign to promote a positive librarian image. Was it successful? By examining actual portrayals of librarians in movies made during the last ten years, this study finds an answer to that question. As Scherdin's study documents, professional librarians' personality types don't fit the negative stereotype as was once thought. This study examines whether this change in reality is reflected in the movies. Examples were reviewed to see whether a majority of librarian portrayals exhibit positive characteristics or whether a majority still remain negative.

Definition of Terms

As noted above, the stereotypical image of librarians in the movies is one of an old maid. This stereotype includes the following characteristics gathered from the literature: female, not young, single, wears glasses, hair in a bun, conservative dress, unattractive, "shushes" people, non-professional (just stamps book etc.), and is unapproachable or intimidating. Images exhibiting characteristics opposite of these were considered positive images.

Most of these characteristics are obviously defined, but others, such as the personality characteristics need further clarification. Conservative dress refers to the frumpy, unflattering, muted color attire adorned by stereotype librarians. This usually consists of a long, douty skirt or dress and an old-fashioned, baggy sweater.

An approachable librarian is considered one who is friendly to patrons, willing to help, and who's not intimidating. A librarian was considered professional if he or she was shown carrying out standard reference work such as assisting patrons with finding materials. Librarians seen shelving books, stamping books, or simply checking out books were not considered professional. Also, if dialog suggested the librarian is a volunteer, clerk, or a non-MLS librarian than he or she was classified as non-professional.

A librarian classified as enthusiastic is one who enjoys working as a librarian, encourages people to explore the library, or who works at expanding his or her duties as a librarian. Finally, a librarian was seen as useful if the patron benefits from the help the librarian gives, if patrons choose to ask the librarian for help, or if characters express a sincere appreciation for the librarian's services. By applying the same qualities to a library one can identify a library which is seen as useful.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A wealth of literature has been written on the subject of librarians' image in the media and in the minds of the public. American Libraries even includes an image column which showcases specific examples of librarian images in the media including movies. In the previous section of this paper literature has been referred to which notes that librarians are displeased with their portrayal in the movies and why, and also whether the stereotype fits actual librarians today. While not one article mentioned a librarian whom was pleased with the movies' portrayal, some articles reviewed did note that not all portrayals are negative and that librarians are not the only profession to suffer from stereotyping.

For example, Tracey Green believes that literature and movies generally portray positive, varied images of librarians, but that TV sitcoms and advertisements portray negative stereotypes (1994). Martin Raish has collected and studied numerous movies which depict librarians. Raish admits that wearing glasses and a bun, and being unapproachable are common traits of librarians in movies, but also feels that a good number of films have portrayed librarians more positively as bright, young and energetic (Brooks 1997).

Ann O'Brien, who also studied librarians in movies and worked with Raish on compiling an annotated filmography, feels differently. She believes that the stereotype still dominates in movies and that librarians are usually seen shelving, stamping and shushing instead of as energetic professionals (O'Brien 1993). O'Brien examined librarian images in different movie genres and found that in romances librarians appear

the most stereotypical (1993). "Working in the library is a nice safe job while waiting for Mr. Right to drop in and return his books" (O'Brien 1993). Science fiction and fantasy films offer the most positive portrayal of librarians because, "Information usually equals knowledge, which then gives power" (O'Brien 1993).

Karen Wheeler's study of librarians in movies made between 1980 and 1996 found results which proved O'Brien both right and wrong. Wheeler found that stereotypes were changing, but mainly only with librarians portrayed in major roles (1996). This is good news, except that librarians were only given major roles 27 percent of the time (1996). A majority of librarians (52%) appeared in cameo roles only and Wheeler found the stereotype often still exists in these cameo portrayals (1996).

One can see that librarian image studies offer a variety of viewpoints on the status of the media's portrayal. Often different studies are conducted in different years and examine media from different time periods. All of which can produce a different consensus as to the overall portrayal of librarians in the media.

Patricia Schuman believes that studying librarians' physical image in the media is not important, but rather librarians should worry about how libraries and their services are portrayed (1990). "Our focus should not be on how attractive people think we are . . . but how useful, necessary, and important we are to their education, research and everyday lives and work" (Schuman 1990). She considers a librarian who's portrayed as foreboding, boring, complicated, largely inaccessible, or irrelevant to be a negative image (Schuman 1990). Schuman also believes that some of librarians' image problems come from the fact that libraries rather than librarians are usually what is promoted by the profession (1990). "It's one thing to tell people to come to a place. It's quite another to

tell them to consult an expert, well-educated, and highly trained librarian" (Schuman 1990).

Other studies and opinions regarding where the negative librarian image comes from appear throughout the literature. Joan Duffy conducted a study of children's perceptions of librarians by interviewing a group of child patrons in four public libraries in New Haven County, Connecticut. Through studying research, Duffy found that media as well as personal interaction influence children's attitudes and impressions, so her goal was to determine how children viewed librarians and on what they base their views (1990). After interviewing 117 children and analyzing their drawings of librarians, Duffy concluded that "their views appeared to be based on their personal experiences" and were generally positive views (1990).

Several articles claim that childhood experiences are key to how we perceive librarians as adults. Patricia Schuman reports that an SLA Task Force Survey of "community leaders, politicians, lawmaker, government officials, journalists, and educators show[s] that 62 percent formed their image of librarians in childhood"(1990). Linda Wallace concurs by explaining that since three-quarters of adults rarely visit libraries then "what we see in the media can be traced directly to how the writers perceived the librarians of their childhood"(1989).

If people's perceptions of librarians are formed from childhood experiences then adults creating negative images of librarians must have had bad experiences with them as children. Since we've established that not all librarians fit the stereotype then how do these negative impressions form? Tracey Green sites a National Consumer Council survey done in Cambridgeshire which found that 85 percent of public library users were

using the library just to borrow books and therefore most users only had contact with non-professional staff. Therefore, "a clerical image of bookstamping/shelving is fostered rather than an organizing or disseminating one"(1994). Green also believes that since women are predominant in librarianship that some negative characteristics like lower status of the profession, lower credibility and value of library services, result from the perceptions of women held by society (1994).

Societal views of women, mistaking support staff duties for professional librarian duties and promoting libraries rather than librarians all are valid arguments for the origin of librarians' negative stereotype. The image probably resulted from a combination of all these circumstances, so what can be done to change it? The answer from the literature overwhelmingly points to the librarian as the initiator of change. Hall calls for librarians to rise above the image for librarians know they are not like the stereotype (1992). Librarians, should take pride in their profession, and let others see this pride in order to alter the media image(Hall 1992). Schuman feels librarians should take a more active approach and promote the intellectual services of the library profession. "We must seize the initiative, articulate our values, and communicate our pride in who we are and in what we do"(Schuman 1990).

Linda Wallace, speaking for ALA, asserts that librarians as well as their professional organizations need to work at changing the librarian image. "The image of the librarian will change only if we as a profession work together to make it happen"(Wallace 1989). In fact, in 1989 ALA picked up the gauntlet and organized a promotional campaign intended to spread awareness that librarians are professionals. Their National Library Week theme and "Year of the Librarian" campaign were designed

to make the public aware of what librarians really do, to promote the librarian as an informational professional the way doctors are medical professionals, and to make librarians feel proud of their profession(Wallace 1989). This study determines whether ALA's efforts were successful-if the image of librarians in movies over the last ten years has been mostly positive.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

To determine whether librarians' image in the movies is portrayed mainly positively after ALA and others' attempts at change, twenty-eight movies that were made from 1989 to the present, which portray librarians, were examined. The librarians portrayed in these movies range from major characters involved in the plot to minor characters seen only in passing. Most of the examples were collected from previously published bibliographies and then supplemented with several more recent examples which were located by the researcher. Bill Ott's listing in Booklist of librarians on film was short and only contained one movie in the desired time frame. However, his list was derived from Frederick Duda's list in The Whole Library Handbook and serves as a good comparison of consistency between librarian filmographies.

The filmographies I used mainly were Martin Raish's Librarians in the Movies: An Annotated Filmography found on the web, and Ann O'Brien and Martin Raish's "The Image of the Librarian in Commercial Motion Pictures: An Annotated Filmography" found in Collection Management. The article in Collection Management was published in 1993 and contained 126 films gathered by the authors and their colleagues. These films were divided into three categories according to size of the librarian role: major, minor, and passing scene. I selected every movie listed which was made in 1989 or later and ended up with 17 films.

I later discovered a more updated version of a librarian filmography maintained on the web by Martin Raish, a library professor at Brigham Young University. This listing contained over 326 films which were divided into four categories, slightly

different than O'Brien and Raish's 1993 filmography. The A group in this web listing consisted of movies in which "Someone says or does something that clearly identifies himself or herself (or some other character) as a librarian. This person may be a professional, a clerk, a student assistant, a director, or some other type of 'librarian.' Some have major roles, others have barely a dozen words to speak" (1999). The B group contained movies in which a library is present, but "any librarian that might be visible is essentially no more important than a piece of furniture that helps to identify the setting" (1999).

The C group contained movies which pictured a library, but no librarians were present at all. Finally, the D group contained movies in which a character was listed in the credits as a librarian, but the author of the list had not viewed the movie and so wasn't sure in which of the other categories to place it.

With this filmography I was mainly interested with group A whose criteria matched my study. I identified every film listed in this group which was made from 1989 to the present. Thirty-four films were identified in this manner. I also cross-checked the B and D group listings with the 1993 O'Brien filmography to see if any titles matched. Some films were dropped for the updated listing due to absence of a librarian, but seven films matched the B group bringing the total for review to forty-one films. Three other films were added to the list due to convenience and the researcher's movie experience. One film from the D group was made available to the researcher during this study, and two movies from the researcher's own collection, Bed of Roses and At First Sight, which were not mentioned in any filmographies were added to the study. This gave the researcher forty-four films to review.

The researcher collected her films for viewing from several public libraries, the local video store and her own personal collection. After exhausting all her resources, the researcher actually collected and viewed thirty-four films. The ten films which were not collected were foreign films, made for t.v. movies, or were otherwise unavailable on video cassette. Six of the films that were reviewed were then eliminated because they contained no librarian after all. City Slickers II: The Legend of Curly's Gold was listed in the A group, and did contain a scene in a library, but no librarian was present. The same was true with The Two Jakes. The man giving Jack Nicholson a hard time turned out to be a notary public, not a librarian as identified.

The rest of the rejected films were from the B group. The films did contain scenes in a library, but no librarians were present. The two movies in the B group which the researcher knew to contain librarians, City of Angels and Forever Young, led her to examine other films in the B group, but the results suggest that those two films were simply placed in the wrong group. This left the researcher with twenty-eight films in this study (64% of the total identified). The twenty-eight films produced thirty portrayals because two films, Party Girl and The Gun in Betty Lou's Handbag, each contained two distinct librarian portrayals. A data sheet was filled out for each character.

Since Wheeler's study found that librarians in movies are beginning to exhibit more positive characteristics this study's overall findings were compared with her overall findings. Because this study extends three years further than Wheeler's these comparisons serve to determine if trends exhibited in her study are continuing today. By using more up to date and expanded filmographies this study included ten more movies to study than Wheeler found.

For each film certain characteristics of the librarian portrayed were noted A data collection sheet which lists the various stereotype characteristics derived from the literature was developed (See Appendix A). The characteristics were divided into two categories (Physical and Job/Personality) because the literature suggests that these are two distinct parts of the stereotype. The physical characteristics (sex, age, marital status, glasses, bun, and dress) involve those aspects of the librarian portrayal that construct how the librarian looks in the movie. The job/personality characteristics (approachability, shushing, professionalism, enthusiasm, and librarian/library usefulness) are those which construct the way the librarian profession is portrayed through the movie librarian. Some researchers feel they go together to create the negative stereotype and others see them separately (like Schuman). The differing opinions on the status of the image result from different researchers looking at different categories of characteristics, as with Raish and O'Brien. Therefore, both categories of characteristics are included in this study and were analyzed together as well as separately.

Categorical data for both categories of characteristics were collected on each example. If a characteristic was able to be determined from seeing the librarian, reading the credits, or from hearing characters' dialog then a mark was made in the appropriate column for that characteristic. (i.e. Present or Not present, Yes or No.) If a characteristic could not be determined (i.e. marital status) then no mark was made in either column.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

After reviewing the 30 collected portrayals of librarians in movies, data collection sheets were analyzed and sorted in various ways. First, each example was designated as either a positive or a negative portrayal. The characteristics marked in each column were counted to see which side contained the most. This conclusion was then matched with the overall latent impression given by the librarian to confirm the portrayal status. (In a few cases, like Monkey Trouble, the number of characteristics marked in each column were nearly equal, so the latent impression was used as the deciding factor.) The latent impression was designated in the last blank on the collection sheet ("Overall impression of librarian"). This latent impression was determined after viewing the complete portrayal and, without considering the characteristics on the data sheet, deciding whether the librarian was a good or bad character in the overall movie.

Most examples matched on their latent impression and their stereotype characteristics, but four did not: In the Name of the Father, Joe Versus the Volcano, Philadelphia, and Judicial Consent. In each of these cases the librarian exhibited mostly positive characteristics, but gave a negative impression. For example, in Joe Versus the Volcano, Joe Banks is a good special librarian, but his company, his work environment, and his boss are terrible and project a negative impression of working in general. The opening credits even proclaim that Joe has a terrible job. In Philadelphia, the male law librarian is a competent professional providing Tom Hanks' character with valuable information, but he gives a negative impression because he treats Tom Hanks' character with prejudice since he has AIDS.

In the Name of the Father's male police archivist also projects a negative impression because he is unfriendly toward Emma Thompson's character and doesn't show her all the files she needs. He is acting on orders, from the police, however, and the assistant archivist does help Emma Thompson's character immensely by showing her all the files. The law library volunteer in Judicial Consent comes by his negative impression because he turns out to be a psycho trying to kill a judge. His work at the library however is positive. In each of these examples, the negative impression was ignored since it was not related to library work, and the librarian was designated a positive portrayal.

After labeling each data sheet as a positive or negative portrayal, the number of positive and negative sheets were counted. As table one shows, 23 portrayals were positive and seven were negative. The positive portrayals outnumbering the negatives over three to one. This suggests that librarians have been portrayed mostly positively during the last ten years and agrees with Wheeler's findings.

	Positive	Negative	**Total**
Librarians	23	7	30
	77%	23%	100%

Table 1: Overall librarian portrayals

Collection sheets were also divided according to type of librarian portrayed. (See Table 2) Public librarians were portrayed the most at 53% of the total, again agreeing with Wheeler's findings. School librarians were portrayed the least with only one showing (Big Bully). Also interesting was that special librarians were portrayed

positively 100% of the time. Public librarians were portrayed positively 81% of the time, while the rest were more evenly divided among positive and negative portrayals. This shows that while public librarians are the most visible, special librarians are perceived the most positively.

	Total	Positive	Negative
Academic	4 (13%)	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Public	16 (53%)	13 (81%)	3 (19%)
School	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Special	7 (23%)	7 (100%)	0 (0%)
Unknown	2 (7%)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)

Table 2: Librarian portrayals by type of librarian

The next analysis was designed to consider which category of characteristics-physical or job-were portrayed more positively or negatively. While reading the literature on this topic, some discrepancies were noticed in researchers' opinions as to whether the stereotype dominates today or not. This results from studying different types of characteristics, such as physical and job. To determine if either category of characteristics exhibited any trends, all the overall negative data sheets were analyzed. These sheets had most of their check marks in the negative column, so the researcher counted whether most of those negative marks were in physical characteristics or in job characteristics. Table 3 shows the findings.

Physical	4	57%
Job	1	14%
Tie	1	14%
Invalid	1	14%
Total	*7*	*100%*

Table 3: Breakdown of negative portrayals

The tie column in table three indicates how many portrayals were equally negative in both the physical and job categories. The invalid column indicates that one portrayal, Stepping Out, could not be evaluated because the librarian was not shown in her workplace.

The results in table three show that most of the negative portrayals display their negative characteristics in the physical appearance of the librarians. If the one tie is added to both the physical and job columns then the negative physicals out number the negative jobs over two to one.

The same type of analysis was conducted for the overall positive portrayals. The number of positive marks made in each category were counted and the results are shown in Table 4.

Physical	3	13%
Job	9	39%
Tie	10	43%
Invalid	1	4%
total	*23*	*100%*

Table 4: Breakdown of positive portrayals

These data show that a large number of positive portrayals were positive mainly in the job category rather than the physical category. (One film Heart and Souls, was invalid because the librarian was never shown in his workplace.) This agrees with the results of

the negative breakdown results in that the physical category isn't portrayed positively as much as the job characteristic category.

The large number of tied positive portrayals can't be ignored however. Ten portrayals (43%) were found to be equally positive in the physical and job categories. If these ten were added to both the physical and job numbers, then the result becomes thirteen positive physicals and nineteen positive job portrayals. Jobs still outnumber physical in positive portrayal, but the gap isn't as big as in the negative breakdown. Both of these analyses suggest that while many film librarians are positively portrayed, if anything needs improving it would be how librarians are portrayed physically rather than as a profession.

Finally, as another check of the positiveness of physical and job characteristics, all of the portrayals were looked at together. First just the physical category was looked at and the number of marks in each column were counted to determine whether the physical category was mostly positive or negative. Then the same was done with the job category in all the portrayals.

	Positive	**Negative**	**Tie**
Physical	19 (63%)	8 (27%)	3 (10%)
Job	21 (70%)	3 (10%)	4 (13%)
Invalid	*2 on job*		

Table 5: Overall breakdown of portrayals by category

As Table 5 indicates, most of the physical and job categories were determined positive. This should be expected since most of the overall librarian portrayals were

positive. What is interesting to note however, is that when the ties are added to both the positive and negative numbers for both categories the results show that two times as many physical portrayals are positive than negative (22 to 11), while over three times as many job portrayals are positive (25 to 7). This concurs with the findings in the previous two tables that many librarians are portrayed positively in films, but that librarians' physical characteristics aren't portrayed quite as positively as their professional characteristics.

The next way data were analyzed was a count of how many times each characteristic was marked to determine which characteristic was marked the most. The collection sheet in Appendix B shows the results. That characteristic which was marked the most and so was exhibited by movie librarians the most was the absence of hair in a bun. This is a pleasing result since hair in a bun has been part of the negative librarian stereotype for so long. This study reports that 90% of librarians in movies of the past ten years have not had their hair in a bun. Since only 37% of these librarians were male this means that most of the female librarians wore no bun.

Another surprising, yet good result of this analysis was that over half the librarians portrayed in the last ten years wore no glasses. The number wasn't as big as those not wearing a bun, but 57% broke away form the stereotype by not wearing glasses. It would appear that Martin Raish's statement that glasses and a bun are common traits of librarians in movies is no longer true.

Raish also stated that being unapproachable was another common trait among librarians in movies (Brooks 1997). As Appendix B shows, this is not true of librarians

in recent movies. Eighty percent of the librarians portrayed in their work place were approachable.

Ann O'Brien's statement of librarians in movies also doesn't stand up to today's portrayals. She felt that librarians were seen shelving, stamping and shushing rather than as energetic professionals (O'Brien 1993). This study proves this is not the case for recent films. Over half (66%) of the librarians portrayed were professional, and enthusiastic (73%) about their work. Also an overwhelming number, 92%, did not "shush" patrons. Real librarians should be pleased that their movie counterparts are no longer displaying many of the stereotypical characteristics. The only stereotypical characteristic which was portrayed by the majority involved marital status. Out of the fourteen librarians for which marital status could be determined, ten (71%) were single. As this characteristic is part of the "old-maid" aspect of the stereotype and most (60%) of the librarians were young even this characteristic being mostly negative doesn't promote a negative librarian portrayal.

Marital status is an area in which this study's findings do not agree with Wheeler's findings. Neither study could identify the marital status of every librarian, but of those identified, Wheeler had one more married librarian then single. This study found six more single librarians than married. All but one of the single librarians identified in this study were from the time period overlapping Wheeler's study.

Another area where this study's findings differed slightly from Wheeler's was whether the librarian was seen as useful or not. In both studies the difference between yes and no was relatively small, but Wheeler found that the majority (58%) of patrons did not see the librarian as a "problem-solver" or useful. This study found that the majority

of librarians (56%) were seen as useful by patrons. Four of the useful librarians fell out of the time period overlapping Wheeler's, suggesting that portraying librarians as useful is a more recent trend.

In all of the other librarian characteristics common between this study and Wheeler's the findings agree. Regarding the type of roles librarians are given, however, this study differs greatly from Wheeler's. Wheeler found that the majority of librarians (52%) appeared in cameo roles and the remaining librarians were divided pretty equally among major roles (27%) and minor roles (21%). As Table 6 shows, this study found a closer relationship between cameo (40%) and major roles (37%) with minor roles still in the minority (23%). Less cameo roles and more major roles were identified than in Wheeler's study. All major roles were from the time period overlapping Wheeler's study.

	Total	Positive	Negative
Major	*11* *(37%)*	10 (91%)	1 (9%)
Minor	*7* *(23%)*	5 (71%)	2 (29%)
Cameo	*12* *(40%)*	8 (67%)	4 (33%)

Table 6: Librarian portrayals by role

Wheeler analyzed the portrayals of librarians in major roles separately from her overall findings and so this study did the same in order to compare findings. All the same means of data analysis used in the overall study were then applied to just the major role librarians. Those librarians identified as major characters were Laura Burney in Sleeping with the Enemy, Betty Lou Perkens in The Gun in Betty Lou's Handbag, Joe Banks in Joe Versus the Volcano, Martin in Judicial Consent, Harrison Winslow in Heart and

Souls, Lynn Wells in Major League, Dorothy in Stepping Out, Judy and Mary in Party Girl, Mike Hanlen in It, and Andy Dufrain in Shawshank Redemption.

Table 6 shows the positive/negative breakdown of librarians in major roles. Librarians in major roles have the highest percentage of positive portrayals (91%) of all the types of roles. This concurs with Wheeler's findings. The rest of the role types are also mostly positive (minor 71%, cameo 67%) which is not unexpected since the majority of total portrayals was found to be positive.

As with the total study major roles were also analyzed according to type of librarian portrayed. Table 7 shows that the major role results correspond with the total results as far as the frequency of librarian types portrayed. Public again appears the most (45%) followed by special, academic then school. All library types were portrayed 100% positive since most of the major roles were positive.

	Total	Positive	Negative
Academic	*1 (9%)*	1	0
Public	*5 (45%)*	5	0
Special	*3 (27%)*	3	0
School	*0 (0%)*	0	0
Undetermined	*2 (18%)*	1	1

Table 7: Major role portrayals by type of librarian

Next, the categories of characteristics-job and physical-were analyzed separately as with the overall study, so as to determine what makes the positive major roles positive.

Analysis of negative portrayals was invalid since only one librarian, Stepping Out, was negative and she wasn't shown in her workplace.

	Positive
Physical	3
Job	3
Tie	3
Total	*9*

Table 8: Breakdown of positive major role portrayals

As can be seen from table eight, the positive major role librarians exhibit equal amounts of positive physical and job characteristics. This is a better result than the overall positive analysis which found that positive portrayals exhibited more positive job characteristics than physical characteristics.

The breakdown analysis of physical and job categories for all of the major roles concurs with the positive findings. (See Table 9). As before, categories were examined separately and determined either positive or negative according to number of characteristics marked on each side.

	Positive	Negative	Tie
Physical	8 (72%)	1 (9%)	2 (18%)
Job	7 (78%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)*

* 2 invalid in job

Table 9: Major roles by category of characteristics

As expected major roles are mostly positive in both categories, but one category is not more positive than the other as was the case with the overall study. The one librarian who had a negative physical category was Judy in Party Girl who was female, old, single,

and wore conservative clothing. The one librarian who had a negative job portrayal was Joe Banks in Joe Versus the Volcano who was not a professional, was not enthusiastic about his work, and neither he nor his library were seen as useful. The one librarian who was equally negative and positive in her job portrayal was Laura Burney in Sleeping with the Enemy. She was not a professional, yet was enthusiastic about her work.

Finally, a count was made of how many times each characteristic was marked for comparison purposes and to determine which characteristic appeared the most frequently. The data sheet in Appendix C contains the full results. The characteristic which was marked most often was the absence of hair in a bun, just as in the total study. Absence of bun was marked eleven times (100%) and also agrees with Wheeler's findings for major role librarians.

Another characteristic which wasn't marked as many times, but still represents 100% of its characteristic was the absence of shushing. This characteristic was marked eight times with no major role librarian saying "shush." This concurs with the total study's findings which also had a high percentage of no shushing (92%), and with Wheeler's study of major roles which had all but one librarian refrain from shushing.

Other high ranking characteristics among the major role librarians were youth (91% were young), and absence of glasses (82%). Both of these characteristics exhibited a higher percentage of positiveness than in the total study, suggesting that librarians in major roles are even more likely to be young and not wear glasses than are other movie librarians.

Also encouraging is the closing of the gap between number of female and male librarians. Of those in major roles six (55%) were female and five (45%) were male.

This is a closer gap than exhibited by the total study which was 63% female and 37% male. Wheeler's findings for major role librarians agrees with this study's findings.

Several characteristics which don't agree with the total study's findings are professionalism, librarian usefulness and library usefulness. Unfortunately the findings in these areas for major roles are not as positive as those in the total study. Librarians in major roles were found slightly less professional than the total. Five (56%) librarians were not professional in duties exhibited while four librarians (44%) were professional. In the total study, ten librarians (34%) were not professional while nineteen librarians (66%) were professional. Librarians in major roles were equally divided among whether the librarian was seen as useful. In the total study a slight majority (56%) of librarians were seen as useful. Also, only a slight majority of libraries (57%) in major roles were seen as useful. In the total study a marked majority (75%) of libraries were seen as useful. This suggests that librarians in major roles have more of a tendency to not be professional, to not be seen as useful and to not have their library seen as useful than are other movie librarians.

This study's findings regarding perceived usefulness of librarians in major roles is one area which doesn't agree with Wheeler's findings. Unlike in her total study, Wheeler found that a majority of major role librarians (67%) were seen as "problem-solvers" by patrons. As noted earlier the major roles librarians in this study were found to be equal in perceived usefulness with four useful librarians and four librarians not perceived as useful by patrons (three were invalid). Five of the eleven major role librarians in this study were not reviewed in Wheeler's study although they all fell within the overlapping time period.

The only other area where this study's findings of major role librarians did not agree with Wheeler's findings was regarding librarians' marital status. As with the total study, Wheeler found that a majority of major role librarians (56%) were married rather than single. This study found that an even greater majority (73%) of major role librarians were single. Half of this study's single librarians in major roles were not in movies included in Wheeler's study even though all of them fall within the overlapping time period.

Although this study of librarians in major roles doesn't agree on two characteristics with Wheeler's study, this researcher can agree with Wheeler's statement that major roles are braking away from the stereotype on the whole more than other movie librarians. This is especially true for the physical characteristics of librarians. The American Library Association and real librarians everywhere should be pleased to know that librarians appearing in major roles are largely removed from the negative librarian stereotype. The only bad news is that the number of librarians portrayed in major roles has dramatically decreased in recent years. Out of the movies reviewed for this study, no major role librarians were identified after 1994. (See Appendix D for analysis by year.)

This trend does correlate with the number of total movie librarian portrayals. The number of movies containing librarians in any type of role drops off considerably after 1994. Fifteen movies in this study were released from 1989 until 1994. Eight movies containing librarians were released in 1994 alone, while only seven films with librarians were released from 1995 until the spring of 1999. This could indicate that film scripts just haven't included librarians lately, or that not as many films containing librarians have been identified yet by researchers and filmographers for recent years. For example, just

as this study was able to find more movies containing librarians than Wheeler did for the 1989-1996 time period, perhaps future researchers will identify more films containing librarians from the years 1997 to 1999 than this study did.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

After reviewing movie examples and analyzing the data this study is pleased to report that librarians in movies have indeed been portrayed in a positive light over the past ten years. The American Library Association can rest assured that their 1989 promotional campaign for a positive image was not a failure. Since then librarians in films have largely broken away from the negative stereotype and are presented as a valuable profession.

Most of the librarians shown in films during the last ten years are portrayed positively. For example, the law librarian in Quiz Show, released in 1994, was one of the most positive librarian portrayals. He only made a brief appearance but was a young man with no glasses and with professional, stylish dress. He was approachable, professional and enthusiastic about his work. He did not say "shush," and he helped the young lawyer find the information he needed for the case against the game show industry.

As was the case with the librarian in Quiz Show, both physical characteristics and job/personality characteristics are mostly portrayed positively with librarians in recent films. The only task for future filmmakers would be to widen the gap between librarians with positive physical characteristics and librarians with negative physical characteristics. They need to continue showing librarians that are not stereotypical while at the same time decreasing the number of librarians portrayed to match the stereotype.

For example, Mrs. Phelps in Matilda was a positive librarian portrayal. She was approachable, did not shush, was professional, enthusiastic and, along with the library, was viewed as a great resource by Matilda. Matilda finds books she enjoys reading at the

library and spends a lot of time there learning. Mrs. Phelps sees Matilda's enthusiasm for reading and, wishing to encourage her, offers Matilda a library card. Instead of carrying Mrs. Phelps' positive image through to her physical characteristics however, the filmmakers showed her as an old lady with glasses and conservative dress. In the future filmmakers should make sure that librarians are portrayed physically positive just as often as they are portrayed professionally positive.

The type of librarians which are portrayed most often are public librarians, like Mrs. Phelps. These librarians are portrayed positively a vast majority of the time. For example, Nancy Bexler in At First Sight, is a public librarian with many positive characteristics. She is young with no glasses or bun and professional, stylish dress. She is approachable, professional, enthusiastic and does not shush. She and the library are seen as very useful to main character Virgil. Virgil is blind and while showing his girlfriend, Amy, around his hometown he points out the librarian who gets him any book he needs in Braille. They talk on friendly terms and Nancy even teases Virgil by telling Amy to watch out, "he's all hands." Later when Virgil temporarily acquires his sight, he heads to the library to look at pictures in magazines in order to see what things look like that he's never been able to see.

As with Nancy Bexler, practically all librarians in recent films have moved away from the stereotypical image of hair in a bun and shushing patrons. Even a negative portrayal, such as the librarian in Monkey Trouble, exhibited no bun and did not shush anyone. In fact she even make a bit of a racket herself when a monkey unexpectedly appeared in the library.

Librarians in major roles are also very positive and for the most part have even more positive physical characteristics than other film librarians. For example, Harrison Winslow in Heart and Souls, Martin in Judicial Consent, Joe Banks in Joe Versus the Volcano, and Mike Hanlen in It are all young guys without glasses and who dress other than conservatively. In fact their only negative physical characteristic is that they are all single, which since they are all young and some even date isn't really negative either.

One aspect of librarians in major roles which is negative, however, is that they are not portrayed as professional or as useful as often as are other film librarians. For example, Joe Banks in Joe Versus the Volcano is an overall positive librarian portrayal, but he is not shown carrying out professional librarian duties, and neither he nor his library are seen as useful by others in the film. This presents another task for future filmmakers. They need to make sure that librarians in major roles are portrayed more often as useful professionals working in a library valued for its usefulness.

Of course there will probably always be the occasional film librarian who still adheres to the stereotype for comedic purposes like Mrs. Handy in Chances Are. An old, conservatively dressed lady who is mean to patrons and jumps into disciplinary action at the first sign of students "fooling and fiddling" with the Shakespeare folios. But for the most part real librarians can rest assured that their reel counterparts are young, attractive, enthusiastic, and valuable professionals who, from time to time, can even make us laugh.

Appendix A

Data Collection Sheet

Item Reviewing: _____

Role of Librarian: _____ Year Released: _____

Name of Librarian Portrayed: _____

Type of Librarian Portrayed: _____

Physical Characteristics

Sex:	___ female	___ male
Age:	___ old	___ young
Marital Status:	___ single	___ married
Glasses:	___ yes	___ no
Bun:	___ yes	___ no
Dress:	___ conservative	___ other

Job/Personality

Approachable:	___ no	___ yes
"Shushes":	___yes	___ no
Professional:	___ no	___ yes
Enthusiastic:	___ no	___ yes
Librarian seen as useful:	___ no	___ yes
Library seen as useful:	___no	___ yes

Overall impression of librarian: ___ negative ___ positive

Comments: _____

_____

Appendix B

Overall Study Results

Item Reviewing: _____

Role of Librarian: _____ Year Released: _____

Name of Librarian Portrayed: _____

Type of Librarian Portrayed: _____

Physical Characteristics

Sex:	19 female	11 male
Age:	12 old	18 young
Marital Status:	10 single	4 married
Glasses:	13 yes	17 no
Bun:	3 yes	27 no
Dress:	11 conservative	19 other

Job/Personality

Approachable:	5 no	20 yes
"Shushes":	2 yes	25 no
Professional:	10 no	19 yes
Enthusiastic:	7 no	19 yes
Librarian seen as useful:	12 no	15 yes
Library seen as useful:	6 no	18 yes

Overall impression of librarian: ___ negative ___ positive

Comments: _____

_____

Appendix C

Results for Major Roles

Item Reviewing: _____

Role of Librarian: _____ Year Released: _____

Name of Librarian Portrayed: _____

Type of Librarian Portrayed: _____

Physical Characteristics

Sex:	6 female	5 male
Age:	1 old	10 young
Marital Status:	8 single	3 married
Glasses:	2 yes	9 no
Bun:	0 yes	11 no
Dress:	3 conservative	8 other

Job/Personality

Approachable:	1 no	7 yes
"Shushes":	0 yes	8 no
Professional:	5 no	4 yes
Enthusiastic:	1 no	7 yes
Librarian seen as useful:	4 no	4 yes
Library seen as useful:	3 no	4 yes

Overall impression of librarian: ___ negative ___ positive

Comments: _____

_____

Appendix D

Analysis by year

	Total	Positive	Negative
1989	*4*	2	2
1990	*2*	2	0
1991	*2*	1	1
1992	*3*	2	1
1993	*4*	4	0
1994	*8*	6	2
1995	*0*	0	0
1996	*3*	2	1
1997	*2*	2	0
1998	*2*	2	0
1999	*0*	0	0

Table A: Breakdown of total movies by year

	Total
1989	1
1990	2
1991	2
1992	1
1993	1
1994	4

Table B: Breakdown of major roles by year

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Movies Reviewed

At First Sight	1998
Bed of Roses	1995
Big Bully	1996
Bliss	1997
Chances Are	1989
City of Angels	1998
Dream with the Fishes	1997
Forever Young	1992
Gun in Betty Lou's Handbag	1992
Heart and Souls	1993
In the Name of the Father	1993
Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade	1989
It	1990
Joe Versus the Volcano	1990
Judicial Consent	1994
Major League	1989
Matilda	1996
Monkey Trouble	1994
The Pagemaster	1994
Party Girl	1995
The Pelican Brief	1993
Philadelphia	1993
Quiz Show	1994
Shawshank Redemption	1994
Sleeping With the Enemy	1990
Stanley and Iris	1989
Stepping Out	1991
With Honors	1994